NATURAL NEWS

The Field Museum
Exploring
The Earth And Its
People

Weekly Staff Newsletter
August 21, 1998

Voight takes a dive: Undersea exploration yields cryptic species

Janet Voight, associate curator and head of the zoology department's invertebrates division, returned recently from a three-week cruise to the North Pacific Ocean aboard Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute's research vessel the *Atlantis*, mother ship of the manned submersible ALVIN. The cruise with chief scientist Jim Cowen of the University of Hawaii used ALVIN to explore and collect biological samples from hydrothermal vents at the southern extreme of Juan de Fuca Ridge, Baby Bare Seamount, Axial volcano and an Ocean Drilling Program bore hole, affectionately termed "1026B."

The cruise was funded by the National Science Foundation's LexEn (Life in Extreme Environments) program in order to set up collectors to sample bacteria that live in water circulating beneath the Earth's crust. This fluid emerges in a few places in rifts in the ocean surface, including hydrothermal vents, this particular seamount, and places where the Ocean Drilling Program has drilled deep enough into the Earth's crust to penetrate the reservoir. In addition, through the kindness of Dr. Cowen and Dr. H. Paul Johnson of the University of Washington, ALVIN collected animals for The Field Museum during most of the 15 dives on this cruise.

Janet is still sorting these specimens before adding them to our collections. Early highlights are a possible new species of gastropod and mites from hydrothermal vents (which were of special interest to last week's seminar speaker Marilyn Houck of Texas Tech). To Janet the most important are additional specimens of the deep-sea octopus genus she has been studying of late, including videotapes of what she had hypothesized to be members of a cryptic species. Videotape of an octopus from the caldera (or volcano) wall of Axial (1550 meters deep) shows it to have much smoother skin with more closely-packed suckers than do members of the same genus of octopuses videotaped at Baby Bare seamount at 2620 meters. ALVIN pilots succeeded in collecting the specimens that were videotaped, giving Janet her first chance to consider whether the differences she sees in preserved specimens relate to differences in the animals' appearance in life.

When Janet left her shipmates at the end of the cruise, this information became very important. Although she stopped in Chicago for 12 hours one night, she immediately proceeded to the World Congress of Malacology in Washington, D.C., which had begun two days before. The Field Museum was represented by Janet, **Rüdiger Bieler** (a Congress organizer), and **John Slapcinsky**. Janet reported on the existence of a cryptic species in this deep-sea octopus genus, citing the ALVIN videotape from the week before and observations that she had made at Baby Bare during her dive there. Her remarks met with more than a few expressions of envy. Janet's participation in the cruise was supported by a grant from the West Coast & Polar Regions Undersea Research Center.

FIELD NOTES

Week of August 24

Public Events/Special Events

Summer Lecture Series, LH2
- Wednesday, 4 p.m.

Merrill Lynch event in SFH (800)
- Wednesday, 6 p.m.

Chicago Herpetological Society
Montgomery Ward Lecture Hall
- Wednesday, 6 p.m.

Downtown Thursday Nights
- Museum open 5 to 8 p.m.

Abbott event in SFH (600)
- Friday, 6 p.m.

Bears Preseason Game
- Friday at 7 p.m.

No Soldier Field Parking all day

Viva! Chicago
- Saturday and Sunday

Staff/Volunteer Events

Aerobics Class, Classroom A
- Tuesday and Thursday, 5 p.m.

Visiting lecturer in Geology Dept.
Zoology Classroom
- Tuesday, noon

Softball (no game this week)

Audience Research Lunch, LH2
- Thursday, noon

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Wadhwa attends meteoritical meetings in Dublin, Paris

Meenakshi Wadhwa, Assistant Curator in the Geology Department, recently returned from a two-week trip during which she attended conferences in Paris and Dublin. In Paris, she was invited to participate in a Symposium in honor of the late Dr. Paul Pellas, who had been a researcher at the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle since 1953 and was a world-renowned specialist in meteorite studies. Subsequently, she attended the annual meeting of the Meteoritical Society, where she made an oral presentation on her latest geochemical studies of a group of unusual meteorites (called "brachinites"), which are believed to be products of some of the earliest phases of melting on asteroids. This year's Meteoritical Society meeting was held at the historically important campus of Trinity College in Dublin, which was established in the 15th century and is known not only for its alumni, which include some of the most significant Irish writers and poets (among them Oscar Wilde), but also for housing the beautifully illustrated "Book of Kells," dating from around 800 AD. Needless to say, the bustling city of Dublin (with its well-deserved reputation for excellent pubs and restaurants) provided a wonderful backdrop for the conference!

Field Museum group attends World Congress of Malacology

Numerous staff members and students from The Field Museum participated in the recent World Congress of Malacology at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. Among the participants were **Janet Voight**, **Rüdiger Bieler**, **John Slapcinsky** (Zoology, Invertebrates), and **Pete Wagner** (Geology). Janet presented a paper on the cephalopod genus Graneledone from abyssal and bathyal depths. Rüdiger took part with a symposium paper, co-authored with Invertebrates Research Associate Tim Collins and Postdoc Tim Rawlings (both from Florida International University), on refining models of character evolution in gastropod phylogenetics (based on molecular, paleontological and morphological data), and with a paper – as well as a poster – on aspects of molluscan biodiversity in the Florida Keys, with Invertebrates Research Associate Paula Mikkelsen (American Museum of Natural History). Pete presented an invited symposium paper discussing anatomical disparity over time as inferred from modern gastropods. **Lee Weigt** (Biochem Lab) co-authored a paper addressing species boundaries within the bivalve family Lucinidae. University of Chicago/Field Museum graduate students who participated include: **Rachel Collin**, who presented a paper she co-authored on morphology and development of an epitoniid gastropod; **Roberto Cipriani**, who took part with an invited symposium paper (giving a functional view of gastropod larval evolution); and **Rebecca Price**, who presented a cladistic analysis of cuttlebone morphology.

The World Congress, co-organized by Rüdiger Bieler and local host Robert Hershler (Smithsonian Institution) was very successful, with 400 malacologists in attendance. It was a truly international meeting; despite the American venue, nearly 70% of first authors came from non-U.S. institutions. The abstract volume (co-edited by Rüdiger and Paula and published by The Field Museum) contains contributions involving 550 authors from 49 countries. This congress marked the third and final year of Rüdiger's presidency of the Unitas Malacologica (International Society of Malacology); as past-President he will remain on council of that society for another three years. During the congress he was also elected the new President of the Institute of Malacology (not-for-profit publishers of Malacologia, International Journal of Malacology).

Report on Biodiversity Educators' Summit

Carol Fialkowski (ECP) recently returned from the Biodiversity Educators' Summit held at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City (in conjunction with the opening of the American Museum's new Hall of Biodiversity). The goals of the Summit were to build relationships

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO STAFF

Monday, August 31
9-10:30 a.m.
A. Montgomery Ward Lecture Hall

*** Coffee and muffins will be served ***

A FEW "THANK YOUS" FROM FRIENDS...

Every once in a while, an event occurs that forever changes the way one looks at life. I was fortunate enough to witness such an event on August 11. While in Montana visiting the Museum of the Rockies for an upcoming exhibit, **Barbara Ceiga** and I had a brief moment to enjoy one of our nation's fine national parks. After hiking down a trail, Barbara and I where driving out of the park when we saw a young Golden Retriever running down the road. Barbara screamed, "Stop!" I pulled the car over and witnessed an event worthy of Mother Teresa. Barbara got out of the car and scooped the dirty, wet pup into her arms. I told her that we probably shouldn't take the dog, but while covered in sand and sticky dog hair, she insisted that we must find its owner. "This dog needs our help," she exclaimed. The dog looked scared, so I somewhat reluctantly gave in.

After driving about two miles, we hailed a car driving in the opposite direction. It was our young canine companion's owners. I have never seen people happier since the birth of my young cousin. It was at that moment that I realized what a kind heart is. This moment will stay with me for a long time, and I hope that all of us will one day be able to experience the joy that comes from selflessly helping others. Thank you, Barbara.

Jason Grandt

Dear Friends,

"It is good to have an end to journey toward;
but it is the journey that matters in the end." —*Ursula K. LeGuin*

The past two years have been incredible. I remember the overwhelming sense of pride I felt the first time I heard **John McCarter** say that we had scientists "in the field" in more than 56 countries. (I can't tell you how many visitors I have shared this fact with.) Each and every one of us plays a role in our mission whether we are preparing Sue for study and display or preparing to open the Museum after wrapping up a special event at 3 a.m.

I have had the opportunity to learn about and give input on our exhibits and then share this knowledge with Public Services, and in turn with our visitors. I have had the pleasure to know or "know of" people working in every department and many of our dedicated volunteers. One of my personal missions has been to help bridge the gap between the "upstairs" and the "downstairs." We have so much to learn from one another . . . but this process takes forward thinking and an investment of time. We need open and honest communication between all departments because each of us plays a vital part in serving our ever-increasing, diverse public.

I would like to thank all of you at The Field Museum—I have grown so much during my time here. I am moving to California to pursue my continuing journey, but I will always feel a sense of this place no matter where I am. Thanks again!

Annie Crawley

...AND FROM A FIELD MUSEUM MEMBER:

President McCarter,

I like the changes I see in the Museum after decades of being a member. The addition of the Corner Bakery is a decided step forward. The new Museum Shop is a marvel of beauty and planning. We now match shops I've seen in European museums where I have always admired the inventory and the layout. Best of all was issuing tickets to get into Members' Nite. In the past people showed up with Cub Scout troupes, half their neighborhood and people they met on the way to the Members' Nite function. This is the *first* time I actually got near the exhibits and had a chance to talk to curators that I read about in the Museum's newsletter. Thanks and I am looking forward to other improvements.

Josephine S. Chyatte
Northbrook, IL

...AND FOR JOBS WELL DONE!

The following volunteers; **Abigail Lance-Baim**, **Leila Hardmann**, **Jeremy Herrick**, **Alice Yao**, **Jack Chiu**, **Dedric Collins**, and **Jennifer Fox**; should be given a pat on the back for coming together from several different Anthropology curators' offices to do some tough and dirty work. These volunteers, plus staff members **Beal Stafford**, **Jon Rogers**, **Mavis Neconish**, and **Dianne Draeger**, spent the entire day of August 10 moving heavy shelving from the third floor Anthropology storage area to the ground floor, Hall E. The results were quick and dramatic. What a difference volunteers make. Also, thanks to **John Mazza** for clearing an access route through construction areas and **Floyd Blunston** for quick lighting. **Sheila Wheatley**, Anthro's new secretary, deserves credit for getting the all-important pizzas delivered on time, too! Thanks to everyone for working so hard!

Submitted by **Lanet Jarrett**

ATTENTION: Housekeeping, Audio Visual, and Visitor Services Departments!!

The Butterfly Floor Managers would like to thank Housekeeping, Audio Visual, and Visitor Services for making the 1998 Field Museum Insect Parade on August 8 such a huge success! The parade ran smoothly and everyone involved had a wonderful time. We couldn't have done it without all of your help! Thank you again for making the first ever Insect Parade an outstanding event!!

Sincerely,
The Butterfly Floor Managers

Natural News

The *Natural News* is edited by **Rodger Patience** in the Development office (ext. 617, patience@fmnh.org) and **Erica Kelly** in the Finance Department (ext. 584, ekelly@fmnh.org). Submissions are welcome via e-mail or on disk in Microsoft Word or WordPerfect format. The deadline for submissions is Tuesday at noon. Remember – write early and often!

Family Learning in Museums

- **How do visitors learn in family groups?**
- **What are reasonable educational goals for family visitors?**
- **What can we apply about what we know about families and how they learn to the design of museum exhibits and exhibitions?**

Come to the **Audience Research Initiative** brown bag lunch on August 27 and find out!

As museums struggle with building their audiences, research about family learning in museums becomes increasingly important. We will present the results of a series of collaborative family learning research studies that have recently been completed by

Minda Borun
Director of Research and Evaluation
Franklin Institute Science Museum
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

A discussion of the implications for Field Museum exhibits will follow.

Audience Research Initiative Brown Bag Lunch
THURSDAY, AUGUST 27th @ 12:00 p.m.
LECTURE HALL 2, Ground Floor

For more information, please call Deborah Perry at 986-1134.

among leaders in the field of environmental education, develop a "road map" to improving and expanding biodiversity education for students and teachers, and establish a sustainable professional network and support systems for biodiversity education. The participants took part in four small working groups (Funding, Public Awareness, Professional Development, and Sustainable Network). A poll of participants at the Summit further underscored the reputation of Chicago Wilderness (a consortium of 61 local organizations, including The Field Museum, concerned with protecting and restoring biodiversity in the Chicago area); when asked to identify a program, strategy, or idea that they believed worked best to educate people about biodiversity, a majority of the educators named Chicago Wilderness.

Museum Affairs welcomes new Special Projects Manager

Abigail Sinwell joined the Museum on August 10 as the Special Projects Manager for Museum Affairs. Abigail is a recent graduate of Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management as well as an experienced museum professional. Prior to attending business school, Abigail developed traveling exhibitions for the Smithsonian Institution. She was also a Field Museum intern in Museum Affairs during the summer of 1997.

Abigail will oversee a variety of special projects in Museum Affairs and will also conduct planning and analysis for current projects and proposed new ventures. Please join us in welcoming Abigail to the Museum.

Submitted by **Melissa Hilton**

Gaible mounts exhibits in Mount Carroll

In July **Pam Gaible**, Mountshop Supervisor in Exhibits, taught a workshop on Design and Fabrication of Mounts for Exhibit at the Campbell Center for Historical Preservation in Mount Carroll, Illinois. The workshop covered safe handling of collection objects, design, engineering, and fabrication of mounts for exhibit. The four-day workshop had ten participants from museums both large and small throughout the United States.

Submitted by **Martina S. Hough**

Softball News

After a lengthy batting practice Tuesday night, the softball team will be taking a week off before resuming play on Tuesday, September 1 at 5:45 p.m. The regular game was called because of extensive unexcused absences from the lineup.

None of the fabled hitters from Academic Affairs either attended the game or called in their excuses (with one exception from Anthropology who brought her husband, son, and son's friend, nearly 50% of the lineup). The Museum Affairs squad was a total no-show. Except for two players who couldn't stay for the whole practice, the entire Public Services team was unexcused. The Finance ballclub fielded only one player, and the Institutional Advancement side fielded two.

Whatever happened to the venerable Museum tradition of inter-departmental rivalry? Surely we can do better than that! Come to the ballpark on September 1 and have a great time playing a great game . . . and if you don't do it for love of the game, do it to spite some other department. Either way, just do it!

Submitted by **Rodger Patience**

$$ FINANCE FORUM $$

Here is an update on what is happening in the Finance Department which, if you were unaware, consists of the former Budget, Accounting, and Purchasing Departments.

New accounting software

We are working with a consultant to identify a new software package to replace our current system, *Timeline*, which will no longer be supported. Three vendors will make presentations over three days beginning August 28, with purchase and implementation to be completed prior to year-end. The new system we are seeking will have additional features such as the ability to purchase goods and services online and to streamline the budget process.

Budget for 1999

We will soon be beginning the process of setting the operating budget for 1999, so those who are involved should prepare themselves for this most enjoyable task.

Day-to-day

Any unpaid invoices sitting on your desk? Approve them and send them to A.P. and we will pay the vendors.

Free stuff

The Mammals Division has several surplus items to be disposed of. If you can use any of the items listed below for Museum (priority) or personal use, please contact **John Phelps** at ext. 579 by Tuesday, September 1. Unclaimed items will be thrown out.

- One metal specimen case with one broken and one missing door. Case is 46" wide by 39-1/2" high by 38" deep. It comes with a divider and some metal and wood drawers.
- One Lacey Lucy *camera lucida*. Can be used to produce drawings up to 17" by 22".
- Two disassembled wooden upright storage cases with doors. Assembled cases are 24" wide by 84" high by 24" deep. Some assembly required or use as a source of some good aged wood.
- Five steel-framed hardware cloth-surfaced shelves. Shelves are 34" wide by 96" long. Use as-is or disassemble for the steel angles, nuts & bolts, and hardware cloth.
- Two wood cabinets with wood sliding doors on front and back. One cabinet is 76" wide by 33" high by 32" deep. The other is 65" wide by 33" high by 32" deep. These also could be a source of some good aged wood.
- 32 wood boxes with 1-by-6 sides and plywood bottoms. Boxes are 22" square by 6" deep. There is also a limited number of similar boxes 22" wide by 44" long by 6" deep.
- 30 wood drawers. Drawers are 19" wide by 27" long by 3-1/2" deep. These also could be a source of some good aged wood.